



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 166

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2020

No. 207

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CORREA).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

December 8, 2020.

I hereby appoint the Honorable LUIS J. CORREA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2020, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

SUPPORTING THE NDAA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, in a few hours, the House of Representatives will be voting on the National Defense Authorization Act of 2021.

This bill is our Nation's annual defense policy law that the U.S. Congress has approved every year for the last 59 years. It establishes the legal basis for thousands of operations of the Department of Defense, including military

pay, the startup of new technologies, and investment in planes, ships, logistics, and infrastructure at military installations at home and abroad.

This year's bill, like the 59 bills that preceded it, represents 11 months of bipartisan work at the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, whose members and professional staff have worked with the entire Congress to produce a bill that will strengthen our security, support our servicemembers, and boost our economy in countless ways.

As House chair of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee, a body I have served on for 14 years, I want to spend a moment on our section of the bill which I believe is remarkable.

The Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee is vested with jurisdiction of the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps as set forth in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. Those services today are engaged in the highest operational tempo in our military.

In every part of the globe, the Indo-Pacific, the Atlantic, and the Middle East, our sailors and marines are in heel-to-toe operations that are straining our fleet and manpower. Our chief competitors, China and Russia, in these regions have been steadily growing their naval forces in both numbers and quality.

China's navy grew to 355 ships and submarines this year, versus 292 in our fleet. Russia's Navy continues to grow under Putin, particularly with the new, lethal Severodvinsk-class submarines.

With this backdrop, it was quite surprising when, last February, the Trump administration submitted a budget with the lowest number of requested Navy ships since 2009. As the Congressional Research Service noted, the Trump budget asked for just seven new ships and, incredibly, cut one of the two planned Virginia-class submarines, a program that has successfully sus-

tained a two-per-year build rate that began in 2007 under the Obama administration.

This baffling cut ignored all the warnings from commanders who testified at Seapower that our declining, aging fleet of 1980s-era submarines risk losing the one clear tactical advantage that we as a nation retain—namely, our superiority in the undersea domain.

This chart shows the steep decline in the sub fleet in the 2020s, even with a 2-per-year build rate, and the red dotted line shows that the Trump plan worsens that slide.

This cut would also disrupt the skilled workforce that has been assembled over the last decade to execute this highly complex production. At committee, administration witnesses, such as Secretary Esper, gave completely unsatisfactory explanations for this cut, leaving us in Congress with the job to clean up their mess.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that today's bill, in fact, does reverse this cut. Working with Ranking Member ROB WITTMAN, Seapower led the way in restoring the second submarine with offsets and savings as required by the spending cap in the 2019 bipartisan budget law.

We worked with our colleagues on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee to ensure that this \$2.6 billion change will be funded in their bill. And I want to thank retiring Chair PETE VISCLOSKEY for his strong support of this effort, as well as HASC Chair ADAM SMITH and Ranking Member MAC THORNBERRY.

Having the two House defense committees united on this measure ensured that our position would prevail in conference negotiations since the Senate did not initially vote for full restoration.

Ironically, late last month, with Congress deep in the process of negotiating this agreement, the Trump administration suddenly disavowed its own budget

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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and sent a letter to Congress asking us to fully fund the second submarine it wanted to cut just last February. Thankfully, the House had already acted responsibly to do just that earlier this year.

Mr. Speaker, I want to salute Admiral Michael Gilday, Chief of Naval Operations, who foot-stomped the second submarine as the Navy's top unfunded priority this year and also wrote a powerful support letter to Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD that support letter.

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY,
CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS,
Washington, DC, November 13, 2020.

Hon. JOE COURTNEY,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing to follow up on our phone call of November 12, 2020. As I detailed in the Navy's February 19, 2020 Unfunded Priorities List, the second Virginia Class Submarine in Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 remains my top unfunded priority. The FY 2021 shipbuilding budget reflected a balance between requirements, capability, affordability, and the need to sustain the industrial base while maintaining a reasonable degree of risk.

Increased funding to enable the Navy to procure a second Virginia Class Submarine in FY 2021, the 10th under the current contract of the Block V submarine build is critical for a number of important reasons: it supports stability within the industrial base and the workload ramp up for COLUMBIA Class construction and helps mitigate the SSN trough in the late 2020s. Additionally, recent DoD studies highlighted the need to increase the number of submarines to counter the threat.

The Navy supports the President's FY 2021 budget request and will consider the potential for restoring the submarine in future budget submissions, ensuring the proper balance of resources between investing in tomorrow's fleet and sustaining today's fleet. However, if Congress has the opportunity to add one ship to the FY 2021 budget, my recommendation would be an attack submarine. Thank you for your continued support for the United States Navy and its submarine force. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

M.M. GILDAY,
Admiral, U.S. Navy.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Navy League and the AFL-CIO metal trades unions, whose members do such amazing work at our Nation's shipyards, also provided critical advocacy throughout this fight.

Seapower's professional staff Phil MacNaughton, Dave Sienicki, Kelly Goggin, and Navy fellow Lieutenant Commander Cam Massey rose to the challenge and did the hard work to make this plus-up fit within the overall bill.

In my 14 years on Seapower, this act of bipartisan congressional independence and leadership to pass a shipbuilding plan that faithfully addresses our Navy's needs stands out as its finest hour.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the NDAA today.

EN MASSE VOTING BY MAIL IS ILLEGAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, this is my fifth speech in a series on voter fraud, election theft, and the Presidential election.

For emphasis, Congress is the judge, jury, and final arbiter of the 2020 Presidential election contest. Further, America's election system is plagued by systemic flaws that promote voter fraud and election theft.

Joe Biden exploited one such flaw when he brazenly promised more than 10 million illegal aliens that he will give them amnesty and citizenship if they help elect Joe Biden President.

The Constitution's Election Clause, Article I, Section 4, is very clear. Congress has absolute authority over the "times, places, and manner of holding elections" for Federal offices.

Pursuant to the Election Clause, and title 2, United States Code, section 7, Congress set November 3 as the 2020 "day for the election."

For emphasis, Congress set a "day for the election" on which citizens vote. Congress did not set an election week, an election month, or an election season during which citizens can cast votes. Also, pursuant to the Election Clause, Congress created limited exceptions to its "vote within a 24-hour window" mandate, to wit:

Alternative voting means for persons with disabilities;

Overseas persons may vote by absentee ballot;

Persons to be absent from their voting location or State on election day may vote by absentee ballot.

Any voting schemes that allow voting outside of congressionally mandated times and means are illegal under the Constitution and Federal statute.

Congress' reasons for limiting voting to one 24-hour period are described by the 2005 bipartisan Commission on Federal Election Reform, co-chaired by Democrat President Jimmy Carter and former Republican White House Chief of Staff and Secretary of State James Baker. They strongly cautioned against overly broad absentee ballot and vote-by-mail schemes because they "increase the risk of fraud."

The bipartisan commission found that absentee voting has been one of the major sources of fraud in American elections and that vote by mail "is vulnerable to abuse in several ways: Blank ballots mailed to the wrong address or to large residential buildings might get intercepted. Citizens who vote at home, at nursing homes, at the workplace, or in church are more susceptible to pressure, overt and subtle, or to intimidation. Vote-buying schemes are far more difficult to detect when citizens vote by mail."

Mr. Speaker, Congress passed laws to prevent voter fraud and election theft by establishing, with minor exceptions,

a 24-hour window in which to vote. In contrast, socialist Democrats use bureaucratic allies or engaged in rigged lawsuits involving conspiratorial parties and inattentive judges to obtain sham settlement agreements that blatantly violate the Constitution and Federal law to promote voter fraud and election theft with the singular goal of stealing the United States Presidency.

In particular, all en masse vote-by-mail schemes promote voter fraud and election theft and are illegal because they violate Congress' election procedures and 24-hour voting mandate.

As such, all votes cast pursuant to these vote-by-mail schemes are illegal, void, and should not be counted.

Mr. Speaker, the evidence is overwhelming, compelling, and irrefutable. If only lawful votes cast by eligible American citizens are counted, President Trump won the electoral college and a second term as President. Congress can either support illegal voting, voter fraud, and election theft or not.

Because I believe in the rule of law and our Republic, it is my duty as a Member of Congress to, on January 6, object to and vote to reject the electoral college submissions of all States whose election systems are so badly flawed as to render their vote submissions unreliable, untrustworthy, and unworthy of acceptance.

Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what I intend to do.

RECOGNIZING ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF BRIAN JOHNSON, FOUNDER OF WARRIORNOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. CROW) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor today to recognize the accomplishments of Mr. Brian Johnson of Aurora, Colorado, founder of the nonprofit organization, WarriorNOW. Brian is an Army veteran who served in Iraq and personally grappled with suicide after leaving the service.

He founded the nonprofit organization, WarriorNOW, to help veterans get through the same struggles that he faced after coming home. His approach to combating veteran suicide is to connect at-risk veterans with peer mentors. Brian has developed a mentor certification program to ensure that every veteran receives quality mentorship and to ensure that the mentors are supported as well.

In the wake of COVID-19, Brian saw how the pandemic led to worsening PTSD anxiety, depression, and substance abuse throughout the entire veteran community. As a result, he created Daniel's Room, a virtual nightly check-in that began with Daniel, a veteran who Brian was working with who was struggling with substance abuse.

Thus far, WarriorNOW has served over 800 veterans in Daniel's Room.

I would like to thank Brian Johnson and his organization, WarriorNOW, for